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TEN CONSULAR DATES

In the course of preparing a list of attestations of consulates in the papyri of the period 284-641, we have had occasion to examine a number of anomalies.¹⁾ In this article we discuss ten such difficulties of reading or dating and offer our resolution of each.

1. P.Athen. 34

The editor of this report of a physician did not give a transcription of, nor comment on, the last line of the text. Such reports universally have a date at the end,²⁾ and at the date indicated by the hand (III-IVp, according to the editor), one would find either a date by regnal years or, in the fourth century, by a consulate. Examining the photograph (pl. XIII), we find that no regnal formula can be read. The writing of this line is smaller (though not by a different hand) than the rest of the document, and we calculate that about as much of this line is lost as is preserved, thus allowing us ca 20-25 letters. On the basis of the plate, we propose the following reading:

ἑπατείας Οὐοληακίου Ῥουφίνου (καὶ) Φλ(αυίου) Εὐσεβίου κόμιτος

The consuls are those of 347. The titles diverge from those attested elsewhere in that Rufinus is not styled praefectus praetorio, and that neither man seems to be styled vir clarissimus, ὁ λαμπρότατος.³⁾ But as there are in fact traces below this line, we may suppose that the date continued, giving at least the month and day, and in all likelihood preceding that, τῶν λαμπροτάτων. It is not uncommon for the papyri to alternate between giving λαμπρότατος with each consul and giving it in the plural after the pair.⁴⁾ For the lack of an article before κόμιτος, cf. P.Princ.II 81.3 (A.D.344).

1) This list will appear in our Chronological Systems of Byzantine Egypt, forthcoming in *Studia Amstelodamensia*. For a further consular problem with significant implications for the *Fasti*, see our forthcoming article in *Mnemosyne* 31 (1978).

2) See for this class of documents the literature cited in P.Oxy.XLV 3245 introd.

3) For the consulate see P.Oxy.IX 1190.15; XLIII 3146.1; P.Ant.I 31.13; and P. Cair.Preis.39.22.

4) Compare, e.g. from A.D.372, P.Vindob.Sijp.13.1 and P.Lips.85.1.

2. P.Lond. III 1113 (p.lvii descr.)

Seventy years after its description, this text is still the only reference in the papyri to the consuls of 367. It therefore seemed to us worthwhile to check the exact reading. In a visit to London in May, 1977, Bagnall read the date as follows:⁵⁾

[μετὰ τ]ῇν ὑπατείαν Φλαουίου Λουπικίνου κόμ[ι]τος

ἑπι[κ]ῆς τε καὶ πεδ[ι]κῆς δυνάμεως καὶ Φλαουίου

[ca 8: vacat?] Ἰοβίνου τῶν λαμπροτάτων.

It is remarkable that the scribe gives Fl.Lupicinus the titles of comes equitum et peditum. He is otherwise recorded as having been magister equitum in the east from 364 - 367.⁶⁾ His colleague, Fl.Iovinus, was magister equitum in the west. He apparently has no title in the consular formula here other than vir clarissimus.⁷⁾ It is not certain if there was writing at the start of line 3, where any ink is now completely effaced. No other names are recorded for Iovinus which one could restore.

3. P.Lips.13

The loan of money recorded on this papyrus is to bear interest starting from the next month, Hathyr, of the current 8th indiction; the present month is therefore Phaophi, and line 21 indeed gives a date of Phaophi 25 = 22/23.x. The editors restore the consular date as follows: [Μετὰ τὴν ὑπατ]είαν Οὐ[αλεντινιανοῦ] Αὐγούστου καὶ Φ[λαυίου]

[Οὐάλεντος] Αὐγού[στου].

On the basis of this reading, they date the papyrus to A.D.366, for Valentinianus and Valens were consuls together in 365. The editors remark (lines 1-2 n.) on the anomaly of an 8th indiction's (364/5) being spoken of as still current in 366, but their confidence in the reading, particularly of the phi in line 1, leads them to reject the testimony of the indiction.⁸⁾

5) We wish to record our thanks to T.S.Pattie of the British Library for his cordial help on this visit.

6) A.H.M.Jones, J.R.Martindale, and J.Morris, *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire I* (Cambridge 1971) 520-521, Lupicinus 6.

7) *Ibid.*, 462-463, Iovinus 6.

8) The volume properly has only one editor, Mitteis, but it is clear that in P.Lips. 13 the final reading of these lines was that of Wilcken.

This restoration and dating arouse suspicion on several grounds. (1) It is very rare for the indiction to disagree with a consular date by more than one year, and most such instances in fact move in the other direction, i.e. the indiction is too high.

(2) The restoration supposes a much larger restoration at the left in these lines (11 letters in line 1, 9 in line 2) than in the other lines, where only 1-3 letters are lost. The editors were conscious of this difficulty and remarked, "Die beiden ersten Zeilen, bei denen etwas mehr fehlt als bei den übrigen, müssen weiter nach links ausgerückt gewesen sein, als die nachfolgenden." We have examined a good photograph of the papyrus,⁹⁾ and the left margin is broken evenly all along the side, and the number of missing letters must have been the same (2-3) all the way along, except for lines 4-8, where a small strip of papyrus projects to the left with one or two letters on it.¹⁰⁾

This means that one would have to assume a very large projection in line 1 to accommodate the editors' restoration. A restoration of 3 letters would be expected.

(3) The form of the imperial titles restored is very odd. The one secure example of a papyrus giving the titulature for the consuls of the year 365, SB III 6612.2 (22 October 365) reads: ὑπατείας τῶν δεσποτῶν ἡμῶν Οὐαλεντινιανοῦ καὶ Οὐάλεντος αἰωνίων Αὐγούστων. The phrase τῶν δεσποτῶν ἡμῶν is almost never omitted from the consular titulature of living monarchs. Further, one does not expect to find Flavius with Valens alone; if it occurs at all (as in P.Lips.33 ii.1), it should come before both; and normally with emperors it is not found at all.

(4) The document was written by a scribe named Philsarapis. This scribe also occurs in other Leipzig papyri, namely P.Lips. 17 (377) and 28 (381), signing in a manner similar to that here. It is a priori probable that P.Lips. 13 also falls around the same time as his other two texts.¹¹⁾

It seems to us reasonable, therefore, to seek a solution which takes all of these objections into account. This can only be the dating of the papyrus in October, 379, at which time an 8th indiction was current. The consuls of 379, D. Magnus Ausonius and Q. Clodius Hermogenianus Olybrius, are manifestly not present in P.Lips. 13, for the

9) For this we thank R. Jäger of the University Library in Leipzig.

10) In line 8, print [ἀν]αγκάιν.

11) This connection, we find, also struck J. Schwartz; Philsarapis also appears in P. Strasb. 246, a fragment now lacking any date, and Schwartz wondered "si le P.Lips. 13 pouvait être daté de 379 p.C."

reading of Augustus in line 1 is certain. Moreover, no texts have yet been published with these consuls. In fact, no texts from the year 379 with any consulate have been published. The consuls of 378, however, are attested, for example in BGU XIII 2339.1, where they have the form τῶν δεσποτῶν ἡμῶν Οὐάλεντος τὸ ζ´ καὶ Οὐάλεντινιανοῦ τὸ β´ τῶν αἰωνίων Αὐγούστων.

P.Lips. 13 does not at first sight accommodate quite this formula. Two remarks are in order before we go further. First, the papyrus is not complete at the top; no top edge is preserved, and it is quite possible that line 1 of the preserved section is not the original first line. Secondly, the photograph does not quite support the editors' text at all points. A diplomatic transcription of what we can read is as follows:

[...]ειανου[ca 10]αυγουστουκα[ca 7]

[...]αυ.ο.[ca 11]

1. We see no trace of the supposedly certain phi here; Mitteis read only κα[ι in the "Erstdruck", no.6, but Wilcken thought he saw a phi.
2. The third letter is very probably tau, as it is formed in the same way as the tau of αὐτῆς in line 6. Mitteis read αὐτο in the "Erstdruck". The last letter before the lacuna is represented by scattered traces, and we are not absolutely certain what is ink. Arguments can be made for either epsilon or kappa. There may be some ink after the letter in question, depending on its identification.

On the basis of this transcription and the known phraseology of other documents of the period, we offer the following reconstruction:

[Μετὰ τὴν ὑπατείαν τῶν δεσποτῶν ἡμῶν]

[Οὐάλεντος Αὐγούστου τὸ ζ´ καὶ Οὐάλεν-]

[τιν]ειανοῦ [νέου αἰωνίου] Αὐγούστου καὶ [.....]

4 [...]αυ.ο.[τὸ β´] vacat

This restoration provides a regular line length and relies, so far as it goes, on regular phraseology. But the titles of the junior Augustus are a problem; that he was called αἰωνιος and Valens not is a minor problem; if necessary, the word could be added to Valens' titles and those redistributed slightly over lines 1 - 2. That each emperor is separately called Augustus is also not a problem, though it is more common earlier in the fourth century, in the time of the sons of Constantine. But how are we to fill the remaining space? It is conceivable that the remainder of line 3 was blank, as also the

start of line 4, though it does not seem very probable. The contemporary documents provide no phrase beyond Augustus which could be restored here. We can suggest two possibilities, both of which would be unique for this period. (1) Read Αὐτοκ[ράτορος]. The difficulty here is twofold, that this title does not appear in titulature between the early fourth century and the reign of Anastasius,¹²⁾ and that the traces before the lacuna, after what would be a kappa, are not likely to be compatible with rho.¹³⁾ (2) Read [τοῦ ἀδελφιδου] αὐτοῦ. This restoration fills the space (as Αὐτοκράτορος does not), expresses correctly the relationship of Valentinianus II to Valens, and is not an anachronism. It encounters, however, two objections also: that the phrase is otherwise unattested (but cf. in ZPE 23 [1977] 218 the phrase Γρατιανοῦ τοῦ ἐπιφανεστάτου υἱοῦ τοῦ δεσπότης ἡμῶν Οὐαλεντινιανοῦ Αὐγούστου); and that if one reads αὐτοῦ one must dismiss several traces on the photograph as not being ink. From the photograph we cannot exclude either of these hypotheses and prefer in consequence to include neither in the text.

The exact date of P.Lips.13 is 23.x.379 (379/380 being a leap year).

4. SPP XX 114

According to the editor, this text is dated to the consulate of Honorius VIII and Theodosius III, or 409. One is troubled, however, by the unexplained blank of the entire left half of line 2 and the apparent word ending which suggests a word between Αὐγ(ούστου) and τὸ γ'. Still worse, we find in Aegyptus 12 (1932) 375 that Zereteli, rereading the original papyrus, read the indiction number in line 2 as 15. But we have seen on a photograph that the iota is absent; hence it is 5. Neither 15 nor 5 suits the editor's consular date, for 409 is the end of indiction 7 and the start of 8. If we assume that we must be in a year which saw either the end or the start of a 5th indiction, that one of the consuls was a Theodosius and that the other was serving for the third time, we are forced to the consulate of 420, with Theodosius for the 9th time and Fl. Constantius for the 3rd. Now the year of the consulate is itself excluded, since it was divided between the 3rd and 4th indictions. And since the consuls of 421 appear

12) We find the term still in P.Lond.III 1291 (p.lxxi; cf. p.336), in 329 (cf. P.Oxy. X 1265.16; 336 A.D.), but it is exceptional even then. The first example of its reintroduction known to us is P.Lond.III 992, in 507.

13) We have considered possible restorations for consulates in the sixth century (cf. preceding note), but in our opinion the handwriting cannot belong to this period, and in any case we have found no suitable consular formula, and Philsarapis puts a later date out of court.

in a postconsular formula in August, 422 (SPP XX 118), and our text is dated to Mesore 1 (?), or 25 July, a date in 422 is unlikely. The year thus must be 421. The 5th indiction began in this year. We suggest that the text of lines 1-2 of this papyrus be read and restored as follows:

[Μετὰ τὴν ὑπατείαν τοῦ δεσπότης ἡμῶν Θεοδοσίου τοῦ αἰωνίου Αὐγ(ούστου)
τὸ θ' καὶ Φλ(αυίου) Κωνσταντίου τοῦ λαμπρ(οτάτου) πατρ(ικίου) τὸ γ', Μεσορῆ α
ἰνδ(ικτίονος) ε' ἐν Ἀλεξ(ανδρείᾳ).

For the formula of this year cf. e.g. P.Oxy.VIII 1134 and Pap.Lugd.Bat.XIII 8 and 13.¹⁴⁾

5. P. Haun. Inv. 318¹⁵⁾

The editors correctly dated this papyrus to 439, as it has a postconsular formula of Theodosius XVI and Fl. Faustus. But they were unable to make out the end of the first line, where the scribe has not written the date correctly. On the plate we read the consular date as follows:

Μετὰ τὴν ὑπατίαν τῶν δεσποτῶν ἡμῶν Θεοδοσίου τὸ ις' καὶ Φαύ(γου)σ-
του <τοῦ> λαμπροτάτων (lege λαμπροτάτου)

In all likelihood, the scribe has washed out something after Theodosius' numeral, but the precise order in which he made the other corrections is not clear to us.

6. P. Mil. I 64

According to the editor, this text is dated to the consulate of Fl. Anatolius, Choiak 10, and speaks of the current ninth indiction in line 9. On this basis, the date must be 6.xii.440, and it is to 440 that the editor dates it. But he remarks, "Non è da escludere la possibilità che la data fosse espressa con la formula postconsolare." When one considers that there are 10 letters restored in line 1 compared to 18 in 3, 19 in 4, and so forth, one suspects that a postconsular formula, which would occupy 17 letters, is indeed to be restored. Furthermore, one can see clearly on Tavola XXV that the reading

14) It is curious to note that Wessely apparently mentioned this text years before he published it, in MPER V, p.100 bottom, as PER No.4119, and there he dates it to 420, identifying the consuls as Theodosius (no numeral) and Constans (sic) III. For some reason this citation was not reprinted in SB I 5159ff. along with its neighbors.

15) Univ. of Copenhagen, Cahiers de l'Institut du Moyen-Âge Grec et Latin 6 (Copenhagen 1971), ed. Adam Bülow-Jacobsen and Sten Ebbesen.

ἐνάτης in line 9 is not possible. We read, in fact, δεκάτης on the photograph, and Professor Orsolina Montevocchi has been so kind as to confirm this reading on the original for us. The date is therefore a year later, 6.xii.441.

7. SB V 8264

The editors present the text of lines 1-2 of this papyrus as follows:

[† Ὑπατείας Φλαουίου Μαξιμου τοῦ
 Λαμπροτάτου, Φαρμουθίου ἐ. ἐ., ἐν δ(ικτί)ο(νος) β//

They dated it to 523. The difficulty arises, however, that Pharmouthi of indiction 2 fell in 524. Furthermore, the restoration of line 1 amounts to 8 letters, counting the cross, while that of line 2 comes to 14 letters, as do the restorations of succeeding lines, within a small margin of variance. It is therefore a priori likely that in fact we are dealing with a postconsular date, and that the papyrus is to be placed in 524. Professor Hombert kindly examined the papyrus for us, and Bagnall subsequently studied it with him. We think it safe to say that there is no objection to the restoration of a postconsulate, since the only letter in line 1 before the name of the consul can as well be a nu as a sigma in this hand, and the edge of the papyrus is straight. We read, therefore, [Μετὰ τὴν ὑπατείαν κτλ.¹⁶⁾

8. SB VIII 9773

According to its editor's text and restorations, this document is one of only two papyri with consular dates by the consuls of 405. His text reads as follows:

[X X X βασιλείας τοῦ
 ἡ[μῶν δεσπότη]ου Φλαουίου Ὀν[ωρίου
 τοῦ αἰωνίου Αὐγούστου [καὶ Α]ὐτοκράτορος]
 4 ἔτου[ς ι]ᾱ ὑ[πατείας] Φ[λαουίου Στιλ]ίχωνος]
 τοῦ [ἐν]δοξοτά[του] Φαῶφ[ι μηνὸς] ῑ τῆ[ς]
 εὐτυχοῦς τετάρ[της ἐν]δι(κτί)ωνος κτλ.

This text must arouse suspicion, for it would offer an example of dating by regnal years under Honorius, when in fact no dates by regnal years are known after 385¹⁷⁾ and

16) The only alternative means of avoiding the conflict is to read a different month in line 2; but Professor Hombert and Bagnall are agreed that this is not possible.

17) See the remarks of P.J.Sijpesteijn and K.A.Worp, p.239-243 on the few

before the publication of Justinian's Novella 47 in A.D.537. In addition, it suggests that Stilicho's colleague in 405, Fl. Anthemius, was ignored in the papyrus, whereas we know that he appears with Stilicho in SB VIII 9931.¹⁸⁾ Finally, ἐνδοξότατος is not otherwise attested before 446 as an epithet for a consul,¹⁹⁾ and one may observe also that the word μηνός is superfluous and in fact undesirable between the month name and the day.

On the other hand, after 566 the consular date is never again in the papyri given by the consulate of a commoner, who can be styled ἐνδοξότατος. As the earlier period is excluded by the fact that consular dates and regnal formulas are not blended in this way, we are limited to the period 537 - 566. Indiction 4 falls in this period in 540 (we are in Phaophi, thus in the first julian year of an indiction, e.g. of 540/1) and 555. The sequence of letters in line 3, λουστι, suggests that we have the consul of 540, Fl. Iustinus, and since the text evidently does not have a postconsular phrase or a numeral after the name of the consul, it is not likely that p.c. Basilii 14 (555) is the year in question.

On the basis of these deductions, we requested a photograph from Vienna; once again we have to thank H.Harrauer and M.Fackelmann for responding to our request. On this photograph we read the following:

† Β[ασιλείας τοῦ θειοτάτου καὶ εὐσεβεστάτου]
 ἡ[μῶν] δεσπότης Φλα[ουίου] Ἰουστινι[ανου]
 τοῦ αἰωνίου Αὐγούστου καὶ Αὐτοκράτορος]
 4 ἔτους ιδ' ὑ[πατείας] Φλαυίου Ἰουστίνου
 τοῦ ἐνδοξοτάτου Φαῶφι ἐκάδ'ι τῇ[ς].
 εὐτυχοῦς τετάρτης ἡ[ν] δικτίονος ἐν Ἡρακ(λέους)²⁰⁾

4 ὅ pap.

The papyrus is thus datable to 540, in the 14th regnal year of Justinian (which belongs to documents of the later fourth century where regnal years appear).

18) See ZPE 5 (1970) 86 for the correction of the consulate in this text.

19) BGU XII 2141 is the first example; and after that there is not another instance until 492, in SB VI 9152.

20) In line 8 also one must read Ἡρακ(λέους).

gan on 1.iv), in the 4th indiction, and in the consulate of Fl. Iustinus. The date is 17 October.

9. P.Vindob.Gr.Inv.25948²¹⁾

The editor presents as follows the text of lines 1-2 of this papyrus, which he dates to A.D.571:

[† Μετὰ τὴν ὑπατείαν Φ]λαουίου Ἰουστίνου τοῦ ἐνδοξοτάτου ἔ[του]ς ἔκτου
[ἐβδόμη πέμπτης ἰνδικτίονος.

Line 8 provides the further information that indiction 6 is about to begin, presumably in the following year, for this document is a lease of land for the crops of that indiction. As an indiction 6 began in 572, the indiction accords properly with the editor's date. There is, however, the difficulty that the emperor Justin is never referred to in a consular dating as simply Fl. Iustinus; he consistently has a complicated and long formula of which the following is a simple version: βασιλείας καὶ ὑπατείας τοῦ δεσπότη ἡμῶν Φλ. Ἰουστίνου τοῦ αἰωνίου Αὐγούστου, ἔτους --. And the epithet ἐνδοξότατος is never used of a reigning emperor, only of a private person. We are thus prohibited from dating this papyrus to 571.

The only possible alternative is 541, which was indeed the year after the consulate of Fl. Iustinus (compare previous document).²²⁾ And the simple titulature of the Vienna papyrus coincides exactly with that used for Iustinus in 540. One may naturally object that the mention of a "sixth year" in the formula is an obstacle. But on the photograph printed as Plate III in the edition, we read the end of line 1 instead as Θωθ ε.[.]., providing the month and removing a sixth year. We cannot say with confidence what followed Thoth, but presumably there was a date written out.

10. CPLat.147

The consular date in line 2 of this fragment is printed as follows:

]um XXXIIII post c(onsulatum) Basili bis anno XXI

21) TAAANTA 6 (1975) 52.

22) The one curious feature about a postconsular date in September, 541 by Fl. Iustinus is that the consulate of Fl. Basilius was evidently already known in Egypt in January, as we learn from P.Cair.Masp.II 67126.36 and P.Lond.V 1719.1 But SPP XX

Consular date (541)

To this text R. Cavenaile gives the date A.D.548, evidently on the basis of the assumption that the year 21 mentioned is the regnal year of Justinian, which ended in 548. This dating, however, ignores the figure XXXIII, leaving it without explanation, and does not indicate why we should find the word *bis* in the formula. On the plate published by C. Wessely in SPP XIV, Tafel XII, we read the following:

I an(no) XXXIII: pos(t) c(onsulatum) Basili() anno XXI.

The year 34 is to be taken as the regnal year of Justinian, running from 1.iv.560 to 31.iii.561; the 21st year of the postconsular era of Basilius can be 561 or 562, and is certainly 561 here.²³⁾ We may therefore date this document with confidence to the first three months of 561.²⁴⁾

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136.4, if correctly read, offers an example in February-March of a postconsular date by Fl. Iustinus.

23) During the period after 541, we find two ways of reckoning consular and post-consular years in the papyri. One of these treats the year after the consulate as p.c.1; the other calls it year 2 of the consulate. In practice, "consulate" and "after the consulate" are interchanged, and we thus find two numbers in use for a given year. For the workings of this system, see the remarks of E. Stein in *Mélanges Bidez* (Bruxelles 1934) 869-878 and 887-894. In Cd'E 28 (1953) 373, we find under L 3 the suggestion of 562 as a date for this text, evidently based on the consulate but not the regnal years.

24) We do not know what the few letters after Basilius' name are; there is an abbreviation stroke after them, so that *bis* is not possible. Possibly the letters after the first are *iu* plus abbreviation, i.e. *iu(nioris)*, as Basilius is styled in Latin formulas, cf. J.-O. Tjäder, *Die nichtliterarischen Lateinischen Papyri Italiens aus der Zeit 445-700* (Lund 1955) 521 s.v. *Konsuln*. The *u*, however, is rather dubious, and one is still left without an explanation of what precedes. It does not seem possible to read *v(iri) c(larissimi)* at any point.